A SERMON

PREACHED IN

LAMBETH CHAPEL,

AT THE

CONSECRATION

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

CHARLES

LORD BISHOP OF SAINT DAVID'S,

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1766.

BY WILLIAM DODWELL, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF BERKS.

PUBLISHED BY COMMAND OF HIS GRACE

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR BENJAMIN WHITE, AT HORACE'S HEAD, FLEET-STREET.

MDCCLXVII.

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TITUS i. 7, 8, 9.

A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs as the Steward of God, not ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry, not given to Wine, no Striker, not given to filthy Lucre: But a Lover of Hoſpitality, a Lover of good Men, ſober, juſt, holy, temperate; Holding faſt the faithful Word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort and to convince Gainſayers.

AN amiable Portraiture This, of the higheſt Officer of the Church! Every Quality which can excite Regard and Eſteem and Affection, is repreſented as a proper Part of his Character. Exemplary Morals and ſound Faith are required of every one who is to be promoted to this Office. The Apoſtle did not think that it would leſſen the Importance of revealed Religion, but that it would illuſtrate and heighten it, to be very particular in ſpecifying all thoſe Virtues, which a wiſe Heathen would acknowledge to be neceſſary to form a *good Man*; but then he does not reſt here, as if the Evangelical Diſpenſation was nothing more than an

excellent Syſtem of *Morality*, but he takes care to add the Neceſſity of competent Inſtruction in and ſincere Aſſent to the *peculiar Doctrines of the Goſpel*, to qualify a Man for that Office, from which ſuch important Benefits were to be derived to others.

To follow the Apoſtle's Method, and to enforce his Admonition, it may be proper to conſider,

Firſt, *Who* this *Officer* in the Church was, concerning whom he was ſo ſolicitous to give ſuch particular Directions;

Secondly, *What* were the *Qualifications* neceſſary for a Perſon of that Station and Character;

Thirdly, The *Reaſons* why theſe Talents were ſo particularly required in this Office.

The Eccleſiaſtical Officer here ſpoken of, concerning whom this Direction is given, is here ſtyled *a Biſhop*. The modern Uſe of this Term and Import of this Office, we well know; but we are ſoon cautioned not by this to interpret the *Scriptural* Senſe of it. We are told that it was not then ſo *confined* in its Meaning, but was a Title common to thoſe that bore different Offices in the Church. The ſpecifick Senſe of it, according to its Etymology, we know, is that of an *Overſeer*, but we underſtand it as implying the Overſight of the *inferior*

Officers

Officers of the Church, as well as of the common Members of it.

Before we enter into a particular Examination of the *Scriptural* Uſe of it, it may properly be obſerved, that the Perſons who firſt bore this Office, and of whom Mention is made in the Sacred Writings, did in Fact exerciſe all that *Authority*, which we now aſcribe to thoſe Officers. Theſe Epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus ſuppoſe* that Power in them, the Uſe of which they direct. They ſpeak of their performing ſuch Acts in their own Perſons, as are now the eſſential Parts of Epiſcopal Juriſdiction. They were to inſtruct other Inſtructors, and to *charge them that they teach no other Doctrine*, 1 Tim. i. 3. If they offended herein, they were to *rebuke them ſharply, that they might be ſound in the Faith*, Tit. i. 13. They were to *reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. They were to *ſet in Order the Things that were wanting*,—and to *ordain Elders in every City*, Tit. i. 5. and when they had ordained them, they ſtill retained their Authority over them; for they were to *receive the Accuſation againſt Elders*, when ſufficiently atteſted, 1 *Tim.* v. 19. They are repreſented as performing theſe Offices *ſingly*; are directed, as if the Whole depended on their Judgment, to *lay Hands ſuddenly on no*

Man, 1 Tim. v. 22. and though there is Mention of the *Laying on of the Hands of the Preſbytery*, 1 Tim. iv. 14. yet this was when Ordination was performed by ſome of the Apoſtles themſelves; and if it detracted not from *their* ſuperior Authority, certainly it cannot from that of their *Succeſſors*. And it is obſervable, that St. *Paul*, who uſes that Expreſſion in his Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, does in his Second Epiſtle to him, ſpeak of the authoritative Ordination of him, as derived from himſelf. *Stir up*, ſays he, *the Gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my Hands*, 2 Tim. i. 6. and again ſpeaks of his Aſſiſtants in that Office principally as *Witneſſes* to it, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. It has farther been pertinently obſerved, that one of the earlieſt Writers, who was cotemporary with the Apoſtles, calls the Apoſtles themſelves the *Preſbytery of the Church* (Ignat. ad Philad. § 3.) and that a Conſiſtory of inferior Preſbyters, according to the Language and Senſe of later Ages, cannot well be ſuppoſed to have been eſtabliſhed at the Time and Place when *Timothy* was ordained.

The other Titles aſcribed to them, as *Rulers*, *Angels of the Church*, and *preſiding over others in the Lord*, do all *imply* that Authority of thoſe, whom the Holy Ghoſt had made *Overſeers* over the Church; whom we find

thus

thus diſtinguiſhed in theſe Epiſtles particularly, and in the *Book of Revelation*, from their inferior Brethren; and do clearly eſtabliſh that *Pre-eminence in ſingle Perſons* over all other Eccleſiaſtical Officers, which is contended for in the Title and Office here ſpoken of. So that the *Thing* ſeems to be eſtabliſhed, if the *Word* is diſputed; and the *Power of Epiſcopacy* muſt be allowed, though the *Name* be called in queſtion.

The greater Part of the Advocates for our primitive Form of Church Government have made that Conceſſion to their Adverſaries, which it ſeems by no Means neceſſary to make, that *Biſhops* and *Prieſts* are ſpoken of without Diſtinction in the New Teſtament. The chief Ground of this Conceſſion has been taken from this very Paſſage in the *Text*. It is ſaid that the Term *Biſhop* in this Seventh Verſe, means the very ſame as *Elders* in the Fifth Verſe; and that therefore thoſe Titles are of promiſcuous Signification. But the very Stile here uſed, and the Connection of the Whole, ſeem rather to imply the contrary; namely, that a *Diſtinction of Orders* was here intended, and that there is a regular Advance from the Mention of the inferior to the ſuperior Degree. Would it not have been an unneceſſary Repetition of the very ſame Thing, to have ſaid, *Ordain Elders in every City*,

if

if any be blameleſs——*For a Biſhop*, that is, an Elder, *muſt be blameleſs*, if theſe Titles were meant of the ſame Perſons? But the Tranſition is regular and ſignificant, and the Senſe clear, and the Alteration of the Number from the Plural to the Singular juſt and neceſſary, if we ſuppoſe the Apoſtle to have proceeded from the Mention of the Qualifications of thoſe of a *lower Order*, to the Delineation of that Character which was more immediately to *preſide over the Church*.

And whereas it ſaid, that "if the Biſhop of whom St. "*Paul* here ſpeaks, had been inveſted with an Office "diſtinct from and ſuperior to the *Elder* mentioned "above, there could have been no Reaſon to conclude, "that an *Elder* muſt be blameleſs, becauſe a *Biſhop* muſt "be ſo." (See Dr. *Doddridge* on the Text.) Nothing can be more obvious than this Reaſon. For the *Biſhops* were ordinarily taken out from the *Elders* or *Preſbyters*, and therefore thoſe previous Qualifications were required of them, that they might afterwards be fit to ſuſtain and adorn the higher Office, if they ſhould be called to it:—that, as the Apoſtle had ſaid on another Occaſion, They might *firſt be proved*, and then be promoted to the *higher Office*, *being found blameleſs*, 1 Tim. iii. 10. In this Light the Tranſition is natural; and ſome Streſs

may well be ſaid on the Manner and Stile of his proceeding from the Mention of the *Elders* to that *One Superior* that was ſo early ſet over them. Would it not have been more proper for him to have continued his former Stile, and to have ſaid, that the *Elders*, or the *Preſbytery*, or the *College of Preſbyters*, ſhould be *blameleſs*, uſing ſome collective Term, or plural Expreſſion at leaſt, if ſuch had then been the Church Governors? But the Apoſtle ſpeaks accurately and diſtinctly of that *One Superior* Eccleſiaſtical Officer, to whom he himſelf, and *Titus* to whom he wrote, well knew that the Care of and the principal Authority over the Church was committed.

There is one other Paſſage, wherein it is pretended, that by *Biſhops* were meant no more than *Prieſts*; which is in the Beginning of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Philippians*; where he addreſſes himſelf *to all the Saints in Chriſt Jeſus which are at Philippi, with the Biſhops and Deacons.* But it is eaſy to ſuppoſe that ſeveral might there be gathered together upon a publick Occaſion, when St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle was directed to them;—or ſome might there be newly conſecrated, to be ſent to their reſpective Cities;—or this Epiſtle might be intended as a *circular Letter*, to be read in other Churches, as well

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as at *Philippi*, as ſome of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles profeſſedly were, *Col.* xiv. 16. In either of theſe Caſes, the Mention of *Biſhops* in the plural Number, as well as of *Deacons*, could not but be very proper, without ſuppoſing the Order of *Prieſts* to be meant by them.

In Truth, it appears by the New Teſtament, that for ſome Time there were *Biſhops* and *Deacons* in ſome Churches without the Order of *Prieſts*, though it cannot be proved, that there were in any, *Prieſts* and *Deacons* without a *Biſhop*. The Settlement of Church Government in different Places was gradual; in ſome, ſooner; in ſome, later; in all, however, when finally regulated, in the ſame Form: Which is the moſt material Point relating to the Queſtion before us. When the Apoſtles had converted any People in any City, they did not immediately eſtabliſh amongſt them the *ſeveral Orders*, which we find afterwards univerſally eſtabliſhed; but the Neceſſities of the Church in the Beginning were chiefly ſupplied by *occaſional Officers*, by Perſons particularly inſpired to anſwer thoſe Exigencies. When they reviſited their Converts in thoſe Cities, they began to ſettle a regular Plan, ſometimes reſerving to themſelves the *Supreme* or *Epiſcopal* Power over that Church; ſometimes ordaining and ſettling a *Biſhop* amongſt them, giving

giving *him* Authority to eſtabliſh inferior Officers under him; as St. *Paul* here tells *Titus*, that *for this Cauſe he had left him in* Crete, *that he ſhould ſet in Order the Things that were wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as he had appointed him*, ver. 5.

If it be obſerved that *Biſhops* are ſometimes called *Elders*, it is readily confeſſed, 1 *Tim.* v. 17.—1 *Pet.* v. 1. ---2 *John* 1.--3 *John* 1. but This does by no means prove that They were not more. It ſhould be proved that *Preſbyters* are equally called *Biſhops*, to eſtabliſh the promiſcuous Signification of theſe Titles; but This does not appear in any one Paſſage in theſe Epiſtles.

The *Authority of Prieſts*, and in conſequence, the *Name* muſt have been given to them, to enable them to *preſide in the Church*; but this Authority did not convey that Preſidency with it, which was of diſtinct Appointment. And if it cannot be proved that the *Preſbytery* bore that Title, which in the *Text* is uſed concerning that *ſingle Perſon* who was the ſpiritual Ruler in each Church, then all the Speculations and Arguments to the Prejudice of *Epiſcopacy*, which have been drawn from a ſuppoſed *Sameneſs of Names and Titles*, fall of Courſe; and we may be ſaid to have Scriptural Evidence for

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that primitive Form of Church Government eſtabliſhed amongſt Us.

But if this Point of the *original Signification of Names* would have admitted of more Doubt, yet the known Rules of Interpretation in ſuch Caſes would have fixed the Meaning of them; and theſe will in the Reſult amount to the ſame Thing, and will ſhew that We have no leſs than inſpired Authority for the Continuance of this Form of Eccleſiaſtical Government. The *Senſe of this Text* was not diſputed for the firſt fifteen Centuries after the Birth of Chriſt. The ſpiritual Officer here ſpoken of under the Title of a *Biſhop*, was underſtood to be of an Order diſtinct from and ſuperior to *Prieſts* and *Deacons*; to whom the Government of the Church was particularly committed, together with ſome peculiar Parts in the Adminiſtration of religious Offices, to diſtinguiſh and give Weight to that Superiority. The Enemies of Epiſcopacy could not ſay, during that whole Period, *We have no ſuch Cuſtom, neither the Churches of God.* As far as Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory can give Light, the Fact is againſt them, and acknowledged by them; for it is the *Nature* and *Exerciſe* of original Epiſcopal Power, not the *Extent* of original Epiſcopal Diſtricts, that is now under Conſideration. The Cuſtom at leaſt

of

of *one preſiding Governor* in each Church prevailed in all Countries and in all Ages during the fore-mentioned Period, as extenſively as Chriſtianity itſelf. Now the univerſal Interpretation of the Apoſtolical Rules concerning Church Officers, and univerſal Practice founded upon them, is more than a mere *Opinion*, or bare *Pattern*. It is an authoritative Deciſion, and an authoritative Rule for the Direction of After-Ages.

Conjectures, however, have been offered in Oppoſition to poſitive Teſtimonies. The Adverſaries of this Order have ſuppoſed, that there was at firſt a *Parity of Preſbyters* in the Church, but that ſome Inconvenience being found from this Parity, *one* was, for the Sake of Order and Regularity, appointed to preſide over the others: and this Alteration of the original Scheme is by the lateſt Writer amongſt them, ſuppoſed indeed to have happened very early. (Dr. *Doddridge*'s Note upon this Text.) It muſt in Truth have happened ſo early, that there are no Traces of it either in Scripture, or Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory; which is not credible. If all the Governors of the Church were at firſt *Preſbyters* with joint and equal Authority, and then a new Scheme was laid and ſucceeded, of advancing one above his Brethren, and giving him new Titles and Powers, contrary to the ori-

ginal Deſign and Method, is it conceivable that no Notice ſhould be taken of it, by the earlieſt Writers, either inſpired or uninſpired; but that all ſhould ſo readily ſubmit to it, as to give up their own former Share of Authority: and it ſhould prevail ſo far as to extinguiſh even the Remembrance of the primitive Form of Church Government? Would it not be a Reflection on the Apoſtles to ſuppoſe, that till Experience taught them, they ſhould not foreſee thoſe Inconveniencies in the Scheme of a *Parity* among Church Officers, which this After-Diſtinction was calculated to remedy? and is it not a ſtrong Argument in Favour of the Diſtinction between *Biſhops* and *Prieſts*, that Reaſons ſhould be found ſo ſoon to alter the former ſuppoſed Model, and to eſtabliſh theſe ſeparate Orders of Church Officers for the better Government of it?

Indeed ſuch ſuppoſed *Parity* would have been contrary to the Example ſet by our Saviour himſelf, who inſtituted *Twelve* of the higher Order, whom he called *Apoſtles*, and *Seventy* of an inferior Order, who yet were commiſſioned to preach the Goſpel: and the Apoſtles thought it neceſſary to keep up the Diſtinction by electing one into the higher Order, when a Vacancy happened by the Fall of one of their Number. In the

Catalogue

Catalogue of Church Officers, twice mentioned, whilſt *gifted Perſons* with ſupernatural Endowments ſupplied the Neceſſities of the Church, before a ſtated regular Miniſtry was ſettled, yet there was an apparent *Difference* and *Inequality* amongſt them, 1 *Cor.* xii. 28.—*Epheſ.* iv. 11. And when ſtated Officers were appointed, ſuch an *Imparity* followed of Courſe from the very Method of preaching the Goſpel. The Dictreion to the Apoſtles to *go into all the World, and to preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, implied that they were to *ſeparate*, and to go *ſingly* to found and preſide over Churches; and thus They underſtood it, and practiſed accordingly. This ſhews undeniably, that the firſt Form of Church Government was by the Superiority and Preſidency of a *ſingle Perſon*; and if the ſuppoſed *Parity of Preſbyters* ever had a Being, it muſt have been by a Deviation from the Apoſtolical Pattern, and followed by an immediate Return to it; ſo that no Interval can be aſſigned, in which it ſubſiſted. Had the Apoſtles been appointed as a *Claſſis of Prieſts*, or had meant to have ſet an Example of it, They could not have ſeparated from Each Other, but muſt have ordained a *Collection of Prieſts* together, and have ſent a Colony of Miſſionaries into each Country, inſtead of each

Apoſtle's

Apoſtle's taking to himſelf a diſtinct Region. The very Form of Church Government which would naturally follow from this Method of preaching the Goſpel by ſingle Perſons undertaking ſeparate Miſſions, would and muſt be *Epiſcopal*, or that of having *one ſuperior* Overſeer or Governor over each Church. And when the *Fact* anſwers to this preſumed Conſequence, when it appears that every Church that ever was heard of, had *one* ſuch authoritative Head over other inferior Officers, appointed in it, One would think that the Controverſy was decided, and that mere Conjectures and Suppoſitions ſhould never prevail againſt plain Realities.

Here the Teſtimonies of the earlieſt Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians and Apologiſts is of great Force, not to add to the Doctrines or Inſtitutions of Scripture, but to explain the References there made, by ſhewing how they were underſtood by thoſe, to whom the Apoſtolical Epiſtles were firſt directed, and who could not but know what Form of Church Government ſubſiſted amongſt them. And we have indeed better Accounts to this Purpoſe from Eccleſiaſtical Writers, than could well have been expected. As if They had *foreſeen* what would happen ſo many Centuries after, They have been very particular in diſtinguiſhing the *Titles* of their Eccleſiaſtical

cleſiaſtical Officers, and the Occaſion and Time of the eſpecial Appropriation of them. They tell us, that the principal *Overſeer*, or *Preſident* or *Governor* of each reſpective Church, who ſucceeded that Apoſtle that founded it, did himſelf at firſt bear the ſame Name of *Apoſtle*; but that That *high Title* was ſoon after appropriated to *them only*, who had their Commiſſion immediately from Chriſt himſelf: and that then their Succeſſors, who had hitherto been diſtinguiſhed from common *Elders* by that honourable Appellation, had now, to keep up that Diſtinction, the Name of *Biſhop* appropriated to them; whilſt that of *Prieſts* was retained to diſtinguiſh the next Order from the inferior Inſtitution of *Deacons*. (Theodoret. Comm. in 1 Tim. iii. 1. & in Phil. i. 1. in 25.—Ambroſ. Comm. in Epheſ. iv. & in Gal. xi.---Auguſtin. Ep. 42. ad Fratres Madaur.) And to exclude a Poſſibility of the Suppoſition, that there had been at firſt a *Parity of Preſbyters*, and that an After Human Scheme had ſet *One* over the Head of the reſt, theſe Writers are very particular in tracing the Succeſſion, and enumerating the particular Perſons that had followed Each Other in the Government of their reſpective Churches from the Days of their Apoſtolical Founders.

Even

Even the Firſt and Principal Oppoſer of the Order of *Biſhops*, not indeed as diſowning their Authority, but as limiting the Extent of it, is yet a ſtrong and inconteſtable Witneſs in this main Point, and ſpeaks of the uninterrupted Succeſſion of Biſhops at *Alexandria* from the Time of St. *Mark*, the firſt Founder and Governor of it. (Hieron. Epiſt. ad Evagr.) And he adds in Terms as ſtrong as the moſt zealous Advocates for Epiſcopacy could have uſed: "The Security of the Church de-"pends upon the Pre-eminence of the Biſhop; for if "ſupreme and uncontroulable Power above all other "Eccleſiaſtical Perſons were not committed to Him, we "ſhould ſoon have as many Schiſms in the Church as "Prieſts." Thus both Authority and Reaſon, the Hiſtory of the Appointment, and the Utility of the Inſtitution, concur to ſhew its *Original*.

The Fact is, that the Apoſtles, who knew the Deſign of their Maſter, who in this as in other Inſtances copied after the Pattern of the *Jewiſh Church*, and their immediate Succeſſors who knew the Deſign of the Apoſtles, did univerſally eſtabliſh this Order, and appoint *One* to preſide in each Church over all other ſpiritual Officers. And this *Fact*, in Conjunction with the confeſſed *Neceſſity* of ſuch a *Diſtinction of Orders* as the only Preſervative

vative from endleſs Diviſions and Separations, is the ſtrongeſt Kind of Argument, that the Nature of the Caſe admits of, and may be deemed almoſt equivalent to an expreſs Declaration in Scripture, that *Epiſcopacy* was the firſt authoritative Form of Church Government. The very earlieſt Writers ſpeak of the ſeparate Orders of *Biſhops*, *Prieſts*, and *Deacons* as ſubſiſting amongſt them; and in a Manner that proves that *no other Form* had ever ſubſiſted, and even in ſuch a Manner as to ſhew that They themſelves underſtood this Form to be of *Divine Inſtitution*. (Clem. Rom. 1 Ep. ad Cor. i. Ignatii Epiſt. ad Smyrn. et ad Epheſ. ad Polycarp, &c. Apoſt. Canon. paſſim.)

The *Perſon* or Officer being thus aſcertained, concerning whom the Apoſtle here gave ſuch particular Directions, the *Qualifications* pointed out by Him as neceſſary for a Perſon of that Station and Character, are next to be conſidered.

A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs, ſays St. *Paul*; not only free from real Offence, but from the Imputation of it; One of exemplary Piety and unſpotted Virtue, that He who was diſpoſed to be *of the contrary Part, might be aſhamed, having no evil Thing to ſay of* One whom an uniform Holineſs of Life had recommended to Regard

and Eſteem. The Apoſtle elſewhere, after the Repetition of theſe very Words, adds, *Moreover, He muſt have a good Report of them that are without*, 1 Tim. iii. 7. His Influence on thoſe who are not yet within the Pale of the Church, was to be conſidered; and therefore his Reputation was to be unſullied amongſt thoſe who had not yet embraced his Faith. A View to this Point may be ſuppoſed to have induced the Apoſtle to have mentioned ſome of the Particulars which He proceeds to ſpecify; which, otherwiſe, might well have been thought to have been implied in this general Character of being *blameleſs*.

Habitual Regularity was unqueſtionably required, but the Apoſtle ſeems farther ſolicitous, that his Succeſſor in the high Office of governing the Church might not fail in any ſingle Branch of Duty. In deſcending to Particulars, He ſpecifies firſt the Freedom from a Quality, which if not chargeable as criminal in itſelf, yet in its Effects may be the Foundation of more Evil than might at firſt Sight be apprehended. He muſt be *not ſelf-willed*, not bent on following at all Events his own Judgment, or gratifying his own Humour, without Regard to the Inclinations and Notions and Practices of Others. Men of other Profeſſions do often claim a Kind

of

of Right to indulge their own Singularities, when they do not directly interfere with the Dictates of Religion or Morality; but the *Overſeer of the Church* muſt regard the Weakneſſes as well as Faults of his *Brethren*, muſt conſider the real Prepoſſeſſions as well as the inſincere Objections of *Oppoſers*, muſt conſult the Expediency as well as Lawfulneſs of his *own Actions*; muſt ſometimes comply with Infirmities, in order to avoid greater Evils; and as far as innocently He can, muſt *be made all Things to all Men, that He may by all Means ſave ſome.* 1 Cor. ix. 22.

On this Account He muſt take particular Care to be *not ſoon angry*. *Paſſion* is in All a bad Director, but more eſpecially in One who is to teach Others to moderate their Paſſions, and who ought Himſelf to be a Pattern of Calmneſs and Equanimity to all his Brethren. This is a Caſe wherein ſome Men are apt to deceive themſelves, and not to ſee the Inconſiſtency of their Temper with the Rules of Chriſtian Prudence and Charity. They know that all Anger is not faulty, and therefore allow themſelves to be too eaſily and warmly moved.

The Apoſtle has accurately intimated the Truth of the Caſe, by directing that the Governor of the Church

ſhould be, He does not ſay, *not at all*, but *not ſoon angry*. This Warmth of Reſentment is in ſeveral Caſes allowable, in ſome few, commendable; and We may *do well to be angry*, when the Importance of the Occaſion, and the Method of expreſſing it, will juſtify our Zeal. But it is a Caſe that needs conſtant and ſingular Care; and the general Rule certainly is, that this *Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, In Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the Acknowledging of the Truth.* 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

It is farther added, that the Perſon ſet apart for this Office ſhould be One *not given to Wine.* This We ſo readily ſee the Reaſon of, that We are rather diſpoſed to wonder, why it ſhould be thought neceſſary particularly to inſert it. *Intemperance* certainly diſqualifies a Man for the Diſcharge of every religious Duty, and opens the Way to the Violation of every moral one. But the Reaſon why it was here ſo eſpecially mentioned, might be either to conciliate *Jewiſh Enquirers*, in Alluſion to *their Law*, where the *Uſe of Wine* was particularly prohibited to the *High Prieſt* and his Succeſſors during their Miniſtration in ſacred Offices, *Lev.* x. 9.—or more probably it was owing to the known Character of the *Cretans*,

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amongſt whom *Titus* reſided; and out of the Converts in which Place He was to chooſe thoſe who were hereafter to preſide over the Church. Now the *Inhabitants of Crete* were remarkable for their Senſuality and Indulgence; and it ſeems that in this, as in other Inſtances, the Apoſtle meant that, in order to *avoid giving Offence*, Regard ſhould be had to the *former* as well as the *preſent* Behaviour of thoſe who were to be appointed *Spiritual Rulers*.

Thus in the Verſe before the *Text*, and elſewhere, (1 *Tim.* iii. 2.) He had directed that *a Biſhop ſhould be blameleſs, the Huſband of one Wife.* He did not mean only, that He ſhould not have *two Wives at a Time*, for That was now prohibited to *all Chriſtians* as well as to *Biſhops*; neither did He mean, that it muſt be One, who had *never taken a ſecond Wife*; for That was no more prohibited to *Biſhops* than to Others; but He meant that it ſhould be One, who even before his Converſion to Chriſtianity had always adhered to the original Inſtitution of Matrimony, and had admitted but one Partner in that honourable State. This would do Him Credit in his future Office; for even where Polygamy is tolerated, yet the Unity of that Engagement is always moſt eſteemed: and in like Manner amongſt that intemperate

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Set of People in *Crete*, One who had always avoided being corrupted by that general Contagion, was to be ſelected for the Government of the Church. This was a Vice, which if once contracted, Men would not eaſily be perſuaded, was effectually reformed; and as Nothing would more prejudice the Succeſs of his Labours than this Imputation, there was the more Care required in the original Choice of the Perſon ſet apart for this high Office.

Again, He muſt be *no Striker*. As He muſt not be *ſoon angry*, ſo neither muſt He on any Provocation be *ſo far angry*, as to give Way to perſonal Violence. What may be thought but unſeemly in Others, is inconſiſtent and criminal in Him, and would drive from Him thoſe whom by all honeſt perſuaſive Arts He ſhould endeavour to draw to Him. *The Weapons of our Warfare*, ſays the Apoſtle, *are not carnal, but mighty through God*. 2 Cor. x. 4. They are to be addreſſed to the ſpiritual, not to the carnal Part of the Diſciple, and muſt work in a rational Way on the Nature of a Moral Agent. How diſgraceful a Part of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory had been prevented, if this Rule had been adhered to, and this Part of the Epiſcopal Character had been maintained? With what Grief do We read of ſuch Violences

lences and Perſecutions raiſed and carried on by Some of this ſacred Order, for the Sake of *Errors*, or at moſt, of *doubtful Opinions*, as would not have been juſtifiable even in the Cauſe and Defence of *Truth?* It is owing to our Happineſs in being born and bred in a Proteſtant Country, if We are apt to think that this Direction is leſs neceſſary, whilſt many recent as well as ancient Inſtances in the *Romiſh* Church would ſhew that it has not always proved effectual.

Once more, it is added that a *Biſhop* muſt *not be given to filthy Lucre.* He whoſe whole Buſineſs it was henceforward to turn the Thoughts and direct the Conduct of Others towards a better World, was not to ſuffer his Affections to be engroſſed by the Acquiſitions of this. The Apoſtle never ſpeaks of this Turn of Mind without ſome additional Epithet, or ſtigmatizing Term, which may expreſs his Contempt of and Indignation againſt it. He more than once uſes this very Term of *filthy Lucre*, and his Brother Apoſtle St. *Peter* uſes the ſame upon the ſame Occaſion. 1 *Pet.* v. 2. St. *Paul* elſewhere ſtiles this ſordid Vice, *Idolatry*, as engroſſing the Affection due only to the Supreme Being. Again, He calls it *the Root of all Evil*, as having peculiar Temptations of its own, and giving Strength to all

Others;

Others; and everywhere repreſents it as unworthy the Character of a *Man*, inconſiſtent with that of a *Chriſtian*, and moſt of all diſgraceful and prejudicial to that of a *ſpiritual Ruler*. This high Officer at the Time that St. *Paul* wrote, was by his Station ſet in the Forefront of the Battle, in the very Poſt of Danger, *as it were*, *appointed unto Death*, as the Apoſtle Himſelf expreſſes it, and was therefore more eſpecially to have his Mind diſengaged from the Love of this World, and of the Things of this World, if He ſeriouſly intended and deſired to perſevere in the Diſcharge of his Duty, and to maintain the Cauſe of Chriſtianity with that Reſolution and Firmneſs that it required and deſerved.

And as a Mind unmoved by lucrative Proſpects was the more neceſſary to a Perſon in that Situation on Account of the *Perils* that He was liable to, ſo alſo becauſe of the *Opportunities* and *Temptations* which were put in his Hands by his Office. With this ſupreme Officer of the Church were depoſited the Contributions of the Faithful for the Support of the Brethren, and by Him were diſtributed to *Each One ſeverally as He had Need*; and for this Reaſon it was requiſite that the Diſtributor ſhould have *clean Hands and a pure Heart*, ſhould be far above all

mercenary

mercenary Influence, *not ſeeking his own Profit, but the Profit of many, that They might be ſaved.*

But a Freedom from Vice was not All that was required in One who was to be a principal Inſtrument in eſtabliſhing and governing the Church of Chriſt. The Apoſtle goes on to ſpecify not only what He *ought not*, but what He *ought to be*, namely, *a Lover of Hoſpitality*, diſpenſing the Treaſure of the Church for the true Ends for which it was given; *refreſhing the Bowels of the Saints* by Brotherly Kindneſs; *a Lover of good Men*, diſtinguiſhing, aſſiſting and promoting thoſe of the beſt Characters, eſpecially thoſe that have *laboured in the Word and Doctrine*; *ſober*, that is, as the Original Word ſignifies, calm, prudent, circumſpect, not led by Paſſion, Prejudice, or Indiſcretion. It is added, that He muſt be *juſt*, *holy*, *temperate*; which Qualifications include all Social, Religious, and Perſonal Obligations. He muſt be *juſt*, remarkably righteous, faithful, and punctual in his Dealing with Others: *holy*, or pious rather, inflamed with a ſincere Zeal for the Honour of God, and the Credit and Succeſs of the Goſpel of his bleſſed Son: *temperate*, or eminently abſtemious, and free from the Suſpicion of any improper Indulgence in Senſuality either in Kind or Degree.

Thus as far as Human Frailty would permit, was this *Man of God* to be *perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good Works*, ſhining in every Branch of Duty reſpecting his Maker, his Neighbour, and Himſelf, and thereby diſpoſed and qualified to recommend the Belief and Practice of Chriſtianity to Others. But to do this effectually, Something more than this exemplary Regularity of Life was neceſſary. An uniform Pattern of moral Virtue was an indiſpenſable *Part*, but not the *Whole* of the Epiſcopal Character. It was to be the Duty of his Office, not only by Precept and Example to preach up the Neceſſity of a good Life, but likewiſe to explain the Terms on which the former Violation of Virtue, and the preſent Defects in it were to be expiated, and the Methods in which the Covenant of Grace and Mercy might be applied to the Benefit of ſincere Penitents. He was therefore to be fully inſtructed and firmly fixed in the peculiar Doctrines of Chriſtianity. *Holding faſt*, ſays St. *Paul*, *the faithful Word, as He hath been taught*. He was not to *add to the Words* of the Book of the Divine Prophecy, nor to *take away from them*;—but to *deliver unto Others that which He alſo had received*,—and to *contend earneſtly for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*. The Apoſtle omits not in any one of

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theſe Paſtoral Epiſtles to particular Perſons, to preſs this Point; that They ſhould adhere to the Doctrine of Chriſt's Revelation, as it had been delivered to them. *If any Man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholſome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs, He is proud, knowing Nothing.* 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4. *Hold faſt the Form of ſound Words, which Thou haſt heard of me in Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* 2 Tim. i. 13. *The Things which Thou haſt heard of me among many Witneſſes, the ſame commit Thou to faithful Men.* 2 Tim. ii. 2. *Continue Thou in the Things which Thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom Thou haſt received them.* 2 Tim. iii. 14. The *Authority* of thoſe from whom They received their Inſtructions, was a ſufficient Proof of the *Truth* of the Doctrines to them who were Witneſſes of the Signs and Wonders that They wrought; and whilſt Apoſtolical Truths were adhered to without Addition, Diminution, or Corruption, the Goſpel was, what it was deſigned to be, a perfect Rule of Faith and Manners.

It is ſuppoſed by the frequent Mention of the *Form of ſound Words*, that there was from the Beginning a Summary of the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, on which

at length was founded the Apoſtles Creed, delivered to and aſſented to by thoſe who were promoted to the Government of the Church; and it is more than a Suppoſition, that very early the new Biſhops circulated a Confeſſion of their Faith to thoſe of their own Order, that They might be admitted to Communion with them. In our Church, beſides previous Methods of Security for the Orthodoxy of their Belief, in order to ſecure their *Holding faſt the faithful Word, as They have been taught*, to guard againſt the Flights of private Reaſonings, or the Superſtitions ariſing from Oral Tradition, They are obliged at their Conſecration to declare, that They "are "perſuaded, that the Holy Scriptures contain ſufficiently "all Doctrine required of Neceſſity for eternal Salvation "through Faith in Jeſus Chriſt."

The *Reaſons* why the fore-mentioned Qualifications were ſo particularly required in a Perſon of this Station, are ſignified in the *Text* to be, on Account of the *Dignity* and of the *Intent* of his Office, or, with Reſpect to his Relation to his Creator and his Fellow-Creatures. He was to be conſidered *as the Steward of God*, and as One that was appointed, and therefore ought to be *able by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort and to convince Gainſayers.*

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The Dignity of his Office *as the Steward of God* required this eminent Degree of genuine Virtue and ſound Knowledge here ſpecified. The Principles of natural Religion would ſtrongly inculcate this in Any One who could be ſuppoſed to have received a Divine Commiſſion merely to reform the World. But the Principles on which Chriſtianity teaches us that the World is to be reformed, do ſtill more earneſtly enforce this on all thoſe who have *heard of the Diſpenſation of the Grace of God which is given them to Us-ward*,—that They are to be *accounted of as the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the Myſteries of God.* If then it be *required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful*, much more when the Maſter whom They ſerve is *Divine*; and their Brethren for whom and with whom They ſerve, are joint Candidates with them for Happineſs and Immortality. In ſuch a Character, it is terrifying but to ſuppoſe either Vice or Scepticiſm or Ignorance; where the Honour of the Office would aggravate the Diſhonour of the inſufficient Execution of it, if Thoſe who were engaged in the Work of Heaven, ſhould be found in thoſe Ways of Error or Wickedneſs which lead to the State of Miſery.

The *Uſefulneſs* of their Office to their Brethren was the other *Reaſon* for theſe neceſſary Qualifications in the

Epiſcopal

Epiſcopal Character. The moral Virtues ſpecified would render Him *diſpoſed* to do the moſt important Service to Mankind, and a ſtedfaſt *Adherence to the faithful Word which He had been taught by Revelation*, would make Him *able* both *to exhort and to convince Gainſayers*. An exemplary Life was itſelf argumentative, in ſhewing the mighty Influence and amiable Tendency of this Religion; and it was in itſelf neceſſary to give Force to every other Argument. It would remove the principal Objections and Evaſions which Gainſayers could urge againſt poſitive Evidence, and would open their Hearts to the Diſcernment and Acknowledgement of the Truth. And a fair Repreſentation of the *faithful Word which had been taught by Inſpiration*, could ſcarce fail to carry Conviction with it, as it would ſhew the Doctrine to be worthy of God and deſireable to Men; harmoniouſly reconciling the Divine Attributes, ſeverely condemning Sin, yet yielding ſure and certain Hope to penitent Sinners. *Theſe Things* the chief Paſtor of the Church was to *teach and to exhort*. He was to be *apt to teach*——to *ſpeak the Things which become ſound Doctrine*——to *put Others in Mind*——to *be ready to every good Work*——to *take Heed to Himſelf and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt had made Him Overſeer*;——and to *guard againſt thoſe*

Evil

Evil Men who ſhould ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe Things to draw away Diſciples after them. The Suppreſſion of Hereſy, and the Confirmation of the Faith, by Evangelical Methods, were the diſtinguiſhing Parts of his Office; and therefore his own Life and Faith were to be ſtrictly regulated by the Dictates of the Goſpel.

The Talents, and the Exerciſe of them, required in the *Superior Ruler* of the Church, have, as was becoming, been delivered in Scriptural Sentiments and Expreſſions; for it required Apoſtolical Authority to dictate to One of that Character, *how He ought to behave Himſelf in the Houſe of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.* 1 Tim. iii. 15.

The Application of the Whole may properly be made in the Language of One of ſtill higher Authority, even of *the great Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls. If Ye know theſe Things, Happy are Ye, if Ye do them.* John xiii. 17. Happy is Every One in the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience here, and in a covenanted Title to the Favour of his Maker hereafter; who upon a Review of his Conduct can ſay with the Apoſtle, *I thank Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the Miniſtry.* 1 Tim. i. 12.

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